

# UTAH

## Off-Highway Vehicle Program



Utah State Parks

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## **1. Utah OHV Laws and Rules**

Utah's off-highway vehicle laws and rules promote safety and protection of people, property and the environment. This pamphlet answers frequently asked questions about OHV activities on public lands, roads and trails. It also provides important contact information. Riders are cautioned that additional laws and rules apply to the operation of OHVs. For more information, contact:

### **Utah State Parks and Recreation, OHV Education Office**

P.O. Box 146001

1594 West North Temple, Suite 116

Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6001

(801) 538-7433 within the Salt Lake calling area or

(800) OHV-RIDE outside the Salt Lake calling area.

For a complete listing of OHV laws, visit

**[www.le.utah.gov/~code/FTITL41/41\\_22.htm](http://www.le.utah.gov/~code/FTITL41/41_22.htm)**





## A. Definitions

### **OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE (OHV)**

Any snowmobile, all-terrain Type I vehicle, all-terrain Type II vehicle, or motorcycle.

### **All-terrain Type I vehicle (Type I ATV)**

Any motor vehicle 50 inches or less in width, having an unladen dry weight of 800 pounds or less, traveling on three or more low-pressure tires, having a seat designed to be straddled by the operator, and designed for or capable of travel over unimproved terrain.

### **All-terrain Type II vehicle (Type II ATV)**

Any motor vehicle other than a Type I ATV, snowmobile or motorcycle designed for or capable of travel over unimproved terrain. Does not include golf carts, any vehicle specifically designed to carry a disabled person, any vehicle not designed specifically for recreational use, or farm tractors. (DOES include go-carts, sand rails, dune buggies, etc.)

**Motorcycle** - Every motor vehicle having a saddle for the use of the operator and designed to travel on no more than two tires.

**Snowmobile** - Any motor vehicle designed for travel on snow or ice and steered and supported in whole or in part by skis, belts, cleats, runners or low-pressure tires.

**Low-pressure tire** - Any pneumatic tire six inches or more in width, designed for use on wheels with rim diameter of 14 inches or less and utilizing an operating pressure of 10 pounds per square inch or less as recommended by the manufacturer.

**Motor vehicle** - Every vehicle that is self-propelled.

**Operate** - To control the movement of, or otherwise use an off-highway vehicle.

**Owner** - A person, other than a person with a security interest, having a property interest or title to an off-highway vehicle and entitled to the use and possession of that vehicle.

**Public land** - Land owned or administered by any federal or state agency or any political subdivision of the state.

**Register** - The act of assigning a registration number to an off-highway vehicle.

**Street or highway** - The entire width between boundary lines of every way or place of whatever nature, when any part of it is open to the use of the public for vehicular travel.



## B. Registration

Any OHV being operated or transported on public lands, roads or trails in the state of Utah must display a current OHV registration sticker. Dual sport off-highway motorcycles may be registered as street legal vehicles if they possess the proper safety equipment, have passed a state safety inspection, and carry the proper insurance, or they may be registered as off-highway vehicles. All OHV registrations are handled by the Utah Division of Motor Vehicles.

Non-resident OHV operators are required to purchase a Non-resident OHV Permit for each OHV they bring into the state. These permits are available from vendors located near popular OHV destinations. A complete list of vendors is available at: [stateparks.utah.gov/ohv/vendors.html](http://stateparks.utah.gov/ohv/vendors.html) or Utah State Parks and Recreation (801) 538-7220.

OHVs used on farms and ranches, or for other agricultural purposes, may be registered as implements of husbandry, rather than as recreational vehicles. This one-time registration fee is \$10. If, however, the OHV is used for recreation on public lands, roads or trails, it must also be registered for that purpose.

After receiving the appropriate registration fees, the Division of Motor Vehicles will issue registration stickers to the owner of the vehicle. These stickers must be attached to the OHV in a visible location as follows:

- Motorcycles - On each fork.
- ATVs - On front and rear of the vehicle.
- Snowmobiles - On both sides of the pan, tunnel or hood.
- All other off-highway vehicles - On the front and rear of the vehicle.

Registration papers must be kept with the vehicle.



OHV registrations expire annually on the last day of the month the OHV was purchased. Annual registrations fees are currently set at \$20.50.

OHV registration money returns to the sport. Of the \$20.50 collected from each registration, \$13.50 is dedicated to improvement of summer and winter OHV programs, \$2 is used for safety and responsible riding education, \$2 goes to the Division of Motor Vehicles to cover administrative costs, \$1.50 goes to school trust lands, \$1 goes to electronic transaction fees and \$0.50 goes to search and rescue fees.

For assistance with questions concerning vehicle registrations, contact a local DMV office or:

**Utah Division of Motor Vehicles  
799 North Redwood Road  
Salt Lake City, UT 84116-1909  
(801) 297-7781 / (800) 368-8824**

## **C. Age & Education Requirements**

No one under eight years of age is allowed to operate any OHV on public lands, roads or trails in Utah. Operators eight through 15 years of age may operate an OHV provided they possess an Education Certificate issued by Utah State Parks and Recreation



or equivalent from their home state. Resident operators 16 years of age or older may operate an OHV if they possess either a valid driver's license or an approved OHV Education Certificate.

Education Certificates are issued to anyone eight years of age or older who completes Utah State Parks and Recreation's Know Before You GO! OHV Education Course. Education Certificates are issued for snowmobiles, Type I ATVs, Type II ATVs and motorcycles. For more information on this training opportunity, contact the OHV Education Office at (801) 538-7433 within the Salt Lake County area or toll-free at (800) OHV-RIDE.

## **D. Equipment Requirements**

All OHVs are required to have certain equipment in working order while being operated in Utah, including:

- Brakes sufficient to stop and hold the machine;
- A headlight and taillight while being operated between sunset and sunrise;
- A red or orange whip flag attached to the OHV and at least eight feet off the ground while being operated on designated sand dune areas; and
- A muffler and spark arrestor (snowmobiles are exempt from the spark arrestor requirement).

## **E. Helmet Requirements**

Properly fastened helmets, having at least a "DOT Approved" safety rating for motorized use are required for all OHV operators and passengers under the age of 18 years. A properly fitting, safety rated helmet is the most important piece of safety gear available to an OHV rider. Utah State Parks and Recreation strongly encourages all riders to use helmets.

## F. Prohibited Uses

It is illegal for any person to use an OHV in connection with acts of vandalism, harassment of wildlife or domestic animals, or in the commission of a crime. It is also illegal for anyone to operate any OHV in such a manner as to damage the environment by excessive pollution of air, land, or water, or to abuse the watershed, impair plant or animal life, or create excessive noise.



## G. Operating Areas

Currently registered off-highway vehicles may only be operated on public lands, roads or trails that are signed or designated open to OHV use, or on private property with the consent of the owner or person in charge. The Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other federal and state land managing agencies have responsibility for designating OHV opportunities on their lands. It is the operator's responsibility to know which routes are open to OHV use. Designated Wilderness areas are off limits to all mechanized travel. Respect private property by obtaining permission from the landowner before entering. To assist riders, most agencies provide travel maps indicating where OHV use is allowed. Addresses and

telephone numbers of various land managing agencies can be found at [stateparks.utah.gov/ohv/field-offices.html](http://stateparks.utah.gov/ohv/field-offices.html). Always contact the local land managing authority for current trail maps and riding information. A free CD containing statewide riding maps is available from many local retailers and from our OHV Education Office. For a list of retailers, visit [www.atyourleisure.info](http://www.atyourleisure.info) or call our education office at (801) 538-7433 within the Salt Lake County area or toll-free at (800) OHV-RIDE.

## **Snowmobiling Complexes**

Contact: Utah State Parks and Recreation, P. O. Box 146001, 1594 West North Temple, Ste 116, Salt Lake City, UT 84114. A free CD, along with printed maps of each complex, are available by calling (801) 538-7433 within the Salt Lake County area or toll-free at (800) OHV-RIDE. Maps are also available online at [stateparks.utah.gov/ohv/snow-trails.html](http://stateparks.utah.gov/ohv/snow-trails.html).

## **H. Driving Under the Influence**

Off-highway vehicles are motor vehicles and drug and alcohol restrictions apply. Driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol will result in fines ranging from \$1,300 to \$2,000, driver's license restrictions, suspensions or penalties, and impoundment of the off-highway vehicle.

## **I. Direct Supervision of Youth**

All youth riders under the age of 18 must be under the direct supervision of a person who is at least 18 years of age if operating on a public highway that is open to motor vehicle use and not reserved exclusively for off-highway vehicles. Direct supervision is defined as oversight at a distance of no more than 300 feet and within which visual contact is maintained and advice and assistance can be given and received.

## K. Street Legal ATVs

Beginning October 1, 2008, ATVs may be modified to become street legal and operate on designated public highways. For further information on requirements, contact Utah State of Parks and Recreation at (801) 538-7433 within the Salt Lake County area or toll-free at (800) OHV-RIDE.



## 2. Safety Tips

By following a few simple rules, OHV riders can make certain that every trip is a safe and enjoyable experience. Utah State Parks and Recreation recommends the following safe riding guidelines:

- Always ride in control. Never attempt anything that is beyond your skill level or the machine's capability.
- Always wear the appropriate safety gear. At a minimum, this should include a helmet, shatter resistant eye protection, long sleeves, long pants, gloves, and boots that cover the ankle.
- Only carry passengers if an OHV is specifically designed to do so. Off-road motor-





cycles and most ATVs are designed to be ridden by only one rider. Carrying passengers can alter the balance of the machine, causing a loss of control.

- Riders under the age of 16 should be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.

- Riders should be able to straddle the machine with a slight bend in the knees while both feet are on the footrests. Riders should be able to reach the controls while turning. Riding a machine that is too big is a major cause of injuries to young riders.

- Always leave an itinerary and map with family or friends.

- Be prepared for any emergency. Always carry a tool kit and spare parts, a first aid kit, and survival equipment when riding. Carry plenty of extra food, water and fuel.

- Check the weather forecast before leaving home. For winter riders, always check the avalanche forecast before venturing into the backcountry. Avalanche information is available from the Avalanche Forecast Center (888) 999-4019 or call (800) OHV-RIDE.

- Never, ever drink and ride. Alcohol and OHVs don't mix, but create a deadly and illegal combination.

### 3. Courtesy and Ethics

All riders must be good ambassadors for the sport. Generally, that means learning to share the trails with other users, as well as learning to take proper care of the environment where they ride.

- Protect riding privileges by staying on the trail! Avoid riding in wet meadows or on stream banks. Avoid riding on steep and erodible slopes.
- Avoid riding over small trees and shrubs. Trampled vegetation not only looks bad, but also damages critical wildlife habitat and contributes to soil erosion.
- Always yield the right of way to non-motorized trail users. When encountering other hikers or horses on the trail, pull over and shut off engine. Remove helmet and let others pass.
- Ride in the middle of the trail to avoid widening it. Trail widening is unsightly and expensive to repair.
- Do not alter the manufacturer's muffler system. Loud exhaust systems are annoying to other users.
- Honor seasonal and permanent trail closures.
- When overtaking others, follow at a safe distance until they provide a signal to pass. Be courteous while passing. A little bump of the throttle can leave a shower of gravel or a cloud of dust and an angry rider behind.
- Never harass wildlife or domestic animals while riding. Always view wildlife from a respectful distance.
- Never litter. Always carry bags to pack out trash.

■ Always choose to TREAD Lightly® and protect the fragile environments. For more information on the TREAD Lightly program, please contact Tread Lightly, Inc., 298 24th Street, Suite 325, Ogden, UT 84401 (800) 966-9900.

■ After each ride wash machines to avoid spreading noxious weeds to new areas.



## **4. Protect your Privilege — Stay on the Trail!**

Riding on public lands is a privilege, not a right. Because it is a privilege, it can be taken away if riders don't do everything they can to protect it. Responsible riders know that one way to protect their riding privilege is to stay on the designated trails. They know these routes have been developed to provide them with great riding adventures. They also know that riding areas and trail systems can be closed because of the careless acts of irresponsible riders.

The Utah Natural Resource Coordinating Council, a partnership involving federal and state public land managing agencies, encourages all riders to:

**Protect Your Privilege—Stay on the Trail**



## **5. Know Before You GO!**

Since 1987, Utah State Parks and Recreation has offered OHV education courses through its Know Before You GO! program. Courses in safe and responsible ATV, motorcycle and snowmobile operation are offered to young riders ages eight through 15 years old. Students completing the various courses earn their Education Certificates, and become legal to operate on public lands, roads and trails open to OHV operation. Typically, snowmobile courses are available between October and March, with ATV Type I and Type II and motorcycle courses offered from March through October. Climate variations in the various regions of the state may change that schedule.

As a result of programs like Know Before You GO!, accident and injury rates among young OHV operators have declined dramatically in Utah and across the nation. More than 33,000 Utah youth have participated in this program, and have become safer and more responsible riders.

Experienced riders who would like to volunteer their time to teach ATV, motorcycle or snowmobile safety to children in the Know Before You GO! program are encouraged to contact the





Utah State Parks and Recreation OHV Education Office for information on becoming certified as OHV Education Instructors.

For more information on the Know Before You GO! program, or to request registration materials, please contact Utah State Parks and Recreation OHV Education Office, P. O. Box 146001, 1594 West North Temple, Ste 116, Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6001.

Or contact the office by telephone at: (801) 538-7433 within the Salt Lake County area or toll-free at (800) OHV-RIDE or via the Utah State Parks website at [stateparks.utah.gov](http://stateparks.utah.gov).



## 6. Trip Planning Checklist

Like anything else, a safe and enjoyable OHV ride starts with proper planning. Always give an itinerary to family or trusted friend. Always inspect machines before every trip to make certain they are in top mechanical condition. Operators should be in good physical condition to withstand the rigors of OHV recreation.

In addition to the above suggestions, carrying a few basic items will also help in the event of an emergency. The following checklist will help make every trip fun and safe.

- Plenty of extra water and food
- Extra fuel and oil
- A set of basic tools that fit your machine
- A basic first aid kit
- Extra spark plugs
- A flashlight
- A tow strap or rope
- Waterproof matches
- Duct tape and electrical tape
- A tire repair kit
- A map of your riding area, a compass, and a GPS receiver
- Cell phone or two-way radios
- Camera to record your adventures!

**For extended trips consider the following:**

- Spare throttle and brake cables
- Brake fluid
- Master links for chain repair
- A quality survival kit
- A spare tire or tube

# Happy Trails!

## Utah State Parks and Recreation

P. O. Box 146001

1594 West North Temple, Ste 116

Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6001

[stateparks.utah.gov](http://stateparks.utah.gov)

**OHV Hotline: (800) OHV-RIDE or  
(801) 538-7433 within the Salt Lake area.**

Utah State Parks mission . . .

To enhance the quality of life by preserving and providing natural, cultural and recreational resources for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations.

The Utah Department of Natural Resources receives federal aid and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin or disability. For information or complaints regarding discrimination, contact the Executive Director, Utah Department of Natural Resources, P. O. Box 145610, Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5610 or Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1801 L Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20507.

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***I'm here to save you money.  
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GEICO wants you to stay safe while operating your OHV. Learn to ride your OHV safely by avoiding risky behaviors or stunt riding. Take a few minutes to review these safety tips from the **ATVsafety.gov** website.

**Take an approved safety training course.**

Formal training teaches riders how to control OHVs in typical situations. Riders with formal OHV training have a lower injury risk than riders with no formal training.

**Always wear protective gear – especially a helmet – when riding ATVs.**

Many OHV injuries are head injuries. Wearing a helmet may reduce the severity of these injuries. Select a motorcycle or other motorized sports helmet and make sure the helmet is certified by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) or the Snell Memorial Foundation.

**Do not drive ATVs with a passenger or ride as a passenger.**

The majority of OHVs are designed to carry only one person. OHVs are designed for interactive riding – riders must be able to shift their weight freely in all directions, depending on the situation and terrain.

**Supervise your children and do not permit them to drive or ride adult ATVs.**

Children are involved in about one-third of all OHV-related deaths and hospital emergency room injuries. When children are riding youth OHVs, make sure they are under constant adult supervision to avoid accidents and injuries.

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